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1878

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CHINA PAINTING.

A PRACTICAL MANUAL

FOR THE USE OF

AMATEURS IN THE DECORATION OF HARD PORCELAIN.

BY

M. LOUISE McLAUGHLIN.

"He may do what he will that will but do what he may."—*Arthur Warwick.*

CINCINNATI

ROBERT CLARKE & CO

1878.

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PREFACE.

Having been repeatedly urged to give the results of my experience in china painting to my fellow art-students, I take this method of doing so. A great desire exists at present among those interested in art studies, to acquire a knowledge of painting in enamel colors, and I hope that this record of personal experience may add something to the general information on the subject. It may perhaps be the means of saving beginners from the difficulties which beset my own course when entering upon the practice of the art.

CINCINNATI, *September*, 1877.

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"*Success depends on knowing how to be patient, how to endure drudgery, how to unmake and remake, how to recommence and continue without allowing the tide of anger or the flight of the imagination to arrest or divert the daily effort.*" H. TAINE.

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The art of painting on china is certainly a beautiful one, and is, perhaps, peculiarly fitted to be an agreeable pastime for persons of leisure. There is, however, too general a tendency to consider it simply in the light of an amusement, unworthy of serious study, and an art for the practice of which no special training or knowledge is necessary.

Now, what is worth doing at all is worth doing well, and the idea that one can successfully practice any branch of art without having previously learned to draw is false. The eye and hand must be trained, and the taste cultivated, before any result worthy of the name can be achieved.

The best foundation for any art-work is a

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thorough knowledge of drawing; and the time spent in acquiring such knowledge will never be regretted. It is true that there are methods of decorating china with simple designs, which may be accomplished by those unskilled in the use of the pencil or brush; yet, as the hand of the master is revealed in the most careless sketch, so the want of skill or freedom of touch is apparent in the treatment of the simplest subject.

To those who have the time and patience, as well as the natural ability to learn to draw, we would say: Make it your first business to acquire that knowledge. Cultivate your taste by study of the best models; educate the eye to perceive beautiful forms in nature or art, and the hand to transcribe them.

Painting on china, may not offer the same facilities for the truthful rendering of nature as oil or water-color painting, but it has other compensating advantages in the beauty of the enamel, and the enduring qualities of the pigments, when fixed by the fire.

With the present greatly increased facilities

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afforded by the improvements in the manufacture of colors, china painting should regain something of its former prestige among the arts. In other times the greatest artists exercised their art upon this material, which, seemingly so frail, has preserved their work unharmed for ages.

A revival of the art, however, can not be expected from a servile copying of the old designs and methods. As well might the artists of the modern school have expected to arrive at their present knowledge of *technique* by copying the pictures of Durer or Van Eyck.

There will be no true revival of any branch of art unless founded upon study of nature and the adaptation of her principles to design, and there will likewise be no advance possible to the individual art student without this study and practice.

This study brings with it its own reward in the cultivation of what has been called the artistic sense, which, in the words of Thackeray, reveals "splendors of nature, to vulgar sights invisible, and beauties manifest in forms, colors, shad-

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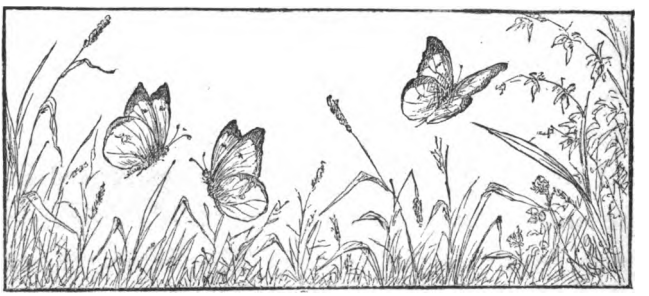
ows of common objects, where most of the world saw only what was dull, and gross, and familiar. One reads in the magic story-books of a charm or a flower which the wizard gives, and which enables the bearer to see the fairies. O enchanting boon of nature, which reveals to the possessor the hidden spirits of beauty round about him—spirits which the strongest and most gifted masters compel into painting or song! To others it is granted but to have fleeting glimpses of that fair art-world, and tempted by ambition, or barred by faint-heartedness, or driven by necessity, to turn away thence to the vulgar life-track and the light of common day."



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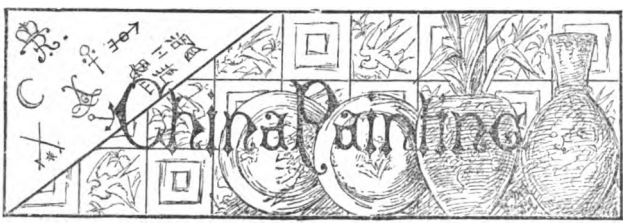

CHAPTER I.

FIRING.

Although firing is the final process of china painting, it may be well to make some remarks upon it here, as to have a successful result the work must always be done with reference to the ordeal by which it is to be completed.

It is generally supposed that two or three firings are indispensable for a piece of work in which various colors are used.

This may be desirable where there are the facilities for firing that exist in places in which porcelain is extensively manufactured and decorated, but here it is impracticable. After the first firing, the heat should be modified for succeeding ones. Where a great deal of work is done, and

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the firings are consequently frequent, pieces in each stage of progress can be fired with others which require the same degree of heat. Here, where there is less work to be done, and the firings are not so frequent, a piece of work intended for a second firing is placed in the same oven with others going through the process for the first time. Repeated firings under such circumstances not only involve much loss of time and considerable expense, but endanger the success of the work.

The absence of facilities for obtaining a second firing is, however, in my opinion no appreciable disadvantage. There may be occasions where an effect desired can only be produced by two firings; but, as a general thing, one is all that is necessary. In my own practice, I have invariably prepared the work to receive but one firing, finishing the painting in the same way as in water colors; usually in one sitting of two or three hours.

Small furnaces called muffles can be procured by which china may be fired by the artist. These are best suited for small pieces; larger ones, it is

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said, are liable to break in such an oven. Muffles would probably be useful where repeated firings were desired, or where the services of a good operator could not be secured to perform that part of the work. Where this is possible, however, it is safer and probably more economical of time and money to have it done by the professional decorator.

A process has recently been invented by a Frenchman, M. Gabelle, by which, it is said, pieces of china of ordinary size and shape may be easily fired at home without a muffle. Having never tried it, I can not vouch for the success of the experiment from personal experience. It has been tried, however, in the presence of many artists and teachers in Paris, who have been convinced of its efficiency in spite of their previous incredulity.

The apparatus necessary — a sheet-iron or earthenware stove in which wood is burned, such as is used in France—is not so common here as to make the experiment within the reach of many. I will, however, give an account of it,

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translated from M. Gabelle's pamphlet, as a suggestion to any who have the facilities and may wish to verify the experiment.

After having repeatedly heaped up pieces of dry wood in the grate, you obtain a thick layer of embers. When the wood is perfectly consumed and you see the blue flames appear, take the piece of china from the oven where it has been previously placed for some moments, and, raising it with the aid of the tongs and a flat shovel which have also been warmed, place it on top of the bed of coals. Close the doors quickly, and, a quarter or half hour afterward, close the damper to prevent the cinders, which commence to cover the surface of the coals, from flying and attaching themselves to the painting.

At the end of from thirty to fifty minutes, according to the heat of the fire, remove the object from the coals with the shovel and tongs, not without having taken the precaution to heat them again, and place it in the oven, that it may not cool too quickly. In firing plates or pieces which

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are not in danger of rolling in the cinders, it is better to wait until they are completely cool.

Astonishing as it may seem, M. Gabelle says he has never known a piece to break in the fire, and that the enamel obtained by this process is of the greatest brilliancy.

Care should be taken, however, that there be no pieces among the coals which would cause smoke. The bed of glowing embers should also be smoothed carefully, so that the painted surface may not be injured by contact with them.

A more intense fire can be obtained by the addition of some large pieces of charcoal when the wood is on the point of being consumed.

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CHAPTER II.

MATERIALS.

The china used for decoration should be of the very finest quality, free from spots or other imperfections of the enamel.

Pieces fulfilling these conditions are difficult to find. However, those only should be selected which are as free from defects as it is possible to obtain them. The hard porcelain of French manufacture is the best for the purpose of decorating.

The colors for painting on china must be vitrifiable, having in addition to the coloring matter a vitreous flux, as it is called, which fixes the coloring matter under the action of the fire, and at the same time imparts great brilliancy and durability to the colors.

Until a comparatively recent date they were procured in powder and mixed by the artist

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with the oils necessary to their use. As the success of the work largely depends upon the proper grinding and preparation of the colors, this method involves considerable risk in the hands of beginners, besides being tedious and annoying to those more experienced. Now that a method of putting up the colors in tubes has been adopted, this tiresome and uncertain process is no longer necessary. Some china painters still prefer to use the powdered colors. Having used both, I would most readily declare in favor of the tube colors, when properly prepared, and think that a like decision will be the result in any case where they are fairly tried. In the following pages, the palettes recommended will be composed from the colors manufactured by M. Lacroix, of Paris. Having had considerable experience in their use, I consider them the best made, and can say of them, that they leave nothing to be desired.

Colors of different manufacture should not be used together in painting.

Brushes for water-color painting may also be

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used on china. Those of medium size, with good points, are the best.

It is rather difficult to procure good blenders here at present. Small camels'-hair brushes with square ends may be had, which will do for blending, when necessary in fine work.

For tinted surfaces, borders, etc., large blenders are necessary. The brushes used by gilders, and called in the trade gilders' dusters, make good blenders for this purpose. No. 9 is a very good size.

For placing the color on these surfaces, a broad, flat camels'-hair brush rather more than an inch in width should be used. For narrow bands and lines, brushes of suitable size, with very long hairs and square ends, are used.

To recapitulate and sum up the materials necessary for painting on china, I would enumerate the following items

1. A set of tube colors, more or less in number, according to the scope of the work to be done.

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As the colors can not be mixed with as great freedom as those for water-color painting, or even oil colors, it is better to have a greater variety than might be necessary in either of those branches of art. For a list which would include the colors desirable to have for every style of painting, containing nothing unnecessary, and from which those requisite for any particular subject could be selected according to the palettes given hereafter under the various heads, we would offer the following:

REDS AND RED BROWNS.

Carmine, No. 3, foncé—Dark carmine.
Rouge chair, No. 2—Flesh red, No. 2.
Rouge capucine—Capucine red.
Brun rouge riche—Dark red brown.
Violet de fer—Iron violet.

PURPLES.

Pourpre riche—Deep purple.
Violet d'or foncé—Dark golden violet.

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BLUES.

Bleu ciel ou azur—Sky blue.
Bleu outremer riche—Dark ultramarine.
Bleu riche—Deep blue.

GREENS.

Vert, No. 5, pré—Grass green.
Vert, No. 6, brun—Brown green.
Vert pomme—Apple green.

YELLOWS.

Jaune à mêler—Mixing yellow.
Jaune d'ivoire—Ivory yellow.
Jaune jonquille—Jonquil yellow.
Jaune orangé—Orange yellow.

BROWNS.

Brun 4 foncé ou 17—Dark brown.
Brun jaune—Yellow brown.

BLACK.

Noir d'ivoire—Ivory black.

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WHITE.

Blanc fixe—Permanent white.

GREYS.

Gris, No. 6, perle.—Pearl grey.
Gris noir—Black grey.

2. A porcelain palette.

3. A glass slab about eight inches square.

4. Several small and medium-sized camels' hair brushes.

5. Several blenders, large and small.

6. A quart bottle of spirits of turpentine.

7. A quart bottle of 98 per cent. alcohol.

8. A small bottle of oil of turpentine, one of oil of lavender, and one of balsam of copaiva.

9. A steel palette knife; also one of horn or ivory.

10. A rest for the hand while painting, made of a strip of wood about an inch and a half wide and twelve inches long, supported at each end by a foot, an inch and a half in height. A

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flat ruler or thin strip of wood may be used for plates, or any flat piece having a raised edge, and may be found more convenient than the more cumbrous rest.

11. A fine needle, set in a handle, for removing particles of dust which may settle in the painting.

12. A small glass muller.

A full outfit, such as is mentioned above, can be procured at a cost of from ten to twelve dollars.

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CHAPTER III.

PREPARING THE DESIGN.

In commencing to paint a design on china, the first thing to be done, of course, is to sketch the outline. The best way to do this is to prepare the china by rubbing the surface with spirits of turpentine, and, after having left it a few moments to dry, draw the design upon it very lightly with a hard lead pencil.

Alcohol may also be used for the same purpose, and has the advantage, that it is not so liable to catch the dust. The surface, however, does not receive the marks of the lead pencil so well as when it is prepared with turpentine. Lithographic crayon may also be used, and without any preparation, but the outline is not so delicate as that drawn with the lead pencil.

If the subject is a difficult one, as for instance, a design containing several figures, time may be

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saved and liability to error avoided by tracing the design, which insures the correct relative position of the figures, and tends to produce the object desired, a correct copy of the original. It is better, however, to sketch simpler subjects directly upon the china.

It is commonly supposed that a tracing is of great assistance to any one unskilled in drawing, but if one is unable to draw a correct outline, it is hardly possible that the painting will be better. It is so very easy to lose the outline in working, that, after all, a tracing is but a slight indication, which has, for its principal use, the placing of the design in exactly the right position on the plate or other object to be decorated.

There are various ways of tracing; the simplest and best of which is the following: Lay a piece of transparent paper over the design to be copied, and trace the outlines very carefully with a hard lead pencil, then turn the tracing paper over on any white surface, and go over all the lines on the reverse side with a soft pencil. You

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can now lay the tracing, right side up, on the china, which has been previously prepared for the lead pencil with turpentine, and having placed it in exactly the right position, secure it by means of bits of modelling wax or gummed paper at the corners, and pass over the lines with a hard point, or rub the entire surface with a rounded instrument. The handle of the palette knife may be used for this purpose. This will transfer the pencil drawing to the surface of the china.

The more delicate the outline the better, provided it is plainly visible, as a heavy, dark or colored outline sullies the colors used upon it, and causes much annoyance in working. Although it may disappear in the firing, it is better to avoid it. Faulty lines in the tracing may be rectified by the use of a sharpened stick of soft wood moistened with turpentine.

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CHAPTER IV.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR PAINTING.

These directions are confined to the use of enamel colors on hard porcelain. This material is suitable for every style, and as the painting is done on the glaze, is capable of receiving the highest degree of finish.

A plate or flat plaque is the best subject for a beginner, as it is more easily managed than cups or other articles with rounded surfaces.

As stated before, the colors in tubes are especially to be recommended to the novice.

If the powdered colors are used, however, the powder should be well rubbed down with a little oil of turpentine and thinned with the spirits of turpentine, a saucer of which should be kept on the table while working, and used in the same way that water is used in water-color painting—for diluting the paint and washing the brushes.

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If the tube colors are used, it will simply be necessary to dilute them with turpentine. If they are difficult to lay, a drop or so of oil of turpentine may be added to the spirits of turpentine. Care should be taken, however, to avoid an excess of oil, as it renders the colors liable to blister in the fire.

The use of clove oil as a medium is advised by some. The color can perhaps be more easily laid with it than with spirits of turpentine. It does not dry so quickly, however, and unless recourse is had to the process of drying the work with the aid of an alcohol lamp, its use involves tedious waiting. Others recommend oil of lavender. For my own part, I think the use of spirits of turpentine decidedly preferable, as in that case no time need be lost in waiting for the work to dry, and it is possible to finish a painting in one sitting.

The drying of the colors is affected by the state of the atmosphere. Statements, therefore, that are founded on the usage of foreign painters, with reference to this point, are prac-

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tically of little value here, as the difference in climate changes the conditions under which the work is executed.

If during the progress of the painting it is found to be difficult to work over the colors first laid, which are indeed very liable to come up, the piece of china may be placed in a moderately warm oven, to dry, before proceeding. On being taken out of the oven, the colors will be found to have lost their gloss, if perfectly dry, and perhaps will have changed their hue. No alarm need be felt at this, as they will return to their former brilliancy when fired.

Some china painters disapprove altogether of any rapid method of drying, and only advise that the work be laid aside until dry, others dry it by means of an alcohol lamp. If you use spirits of turpentine as a medium, however, the part first done will, as a general thing, become dry enough to work over while you are engaged on other portions of the design.

A second vessel containing turpentine should be kept on the working table, for the purpose of

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washing the brushes, especially when the same one is used for various colors.

After using a color containing iron, the brush should be carefully washed before it is charged with one which does not contain iron, or if white is to be used.

The brushes ought not to be too small, and the colors should, as far as possible, be laid in broad washes, and decided touches placed lightly and quickly and not overworked. The use of the blender may be resorted to if necessary, especially in laying the first washes, although it is better to avoid it afterward if possible.

The same rules may be applied to china painting as to water-colors, to which it bears a close resemblance. The greatest art consists in placing each touch where it should go and leaving it, not spoiling it by uncertainty or degrading the tint by overwork. In fine work, lining and stippling are necessary in finishing, but should not be carried to excess or made too apparent. These latter processes are, perhaps, more indispensable in preparing work for a single firing, as it is very

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difficult to lay repeated washes over one another, the under tint comes up so readily, especially when it is not thoroughly dry.

The same place must never be passed over by the brush twice in immediate succession, as the under tint will certainly come up, and the blot caused in the painting will be difficult to rectify. It is of no use to attempt it while it is wet; work on some other part and then go over it, or first dry it in the oven.

Some of the tube colors may require to be rubbed down after being taken from the tubes. This will be especially necessary in the case of the carmines and whites. A horn or ivory palette knife should be used with these colors, as well as with the blues, and all colors containing no iron. Mixtures of colors on the palette may be rubbed down occasionally or mixed with the brush before using, to prevent them from separating themselves into their component parts.

Too much turpentine should not be taken into the brush when it is to be charged with color. Dip it into the turpentine, and, remove

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the surplus moisture by drawing the brush over the edge of the vessel containing it, before taking up the color from the palette. The tint may be tried first on the edge of the plate. Surplus color or moisture may be removed by touching the brush upon a muslin rag, which should always be at hand for the purpose of wiping the brushes.

After using, the brushes should be washed in alcohol. The bottle containing it must be kept tightly corked, as it evaporates very quickly when exposed to the air. Care must be taken that no drops of the alcohol fall upon the painting, as it will immediately remove the colors from the surface. When the large brushes are cleaned, after being washed in the alcohol, the hairs should be spread apart, and the fingers passed lightly over them until they are dry; otherwise, the hairs may stick together in drying, and the brush be rendered unfit for use. Washing in alcohol will prevent the turpentine used in painting from injuring the brushes, as it would if allowed to remain in them.

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As a general rule, the shadows should be painted a little darker than they are to appear when finished, as they are liable to become lighter in the firing.

Dust floating in the atmosphere is very annoying, as it attaches itself so readily to the painting while in progress. The moist color settles around these particles and forms spots on the work which may not disappear in the firing. This should be avoided as far as possible. If it should happen, however, that any particles fall upon the painting, they may be removed with the point of a needle. This instrument will also be found useful for removing surplus color, when desired.

The tube colors should be preserved from heat as far as possible. If they become dry in the course of time, which should not be before they have been kept a year, at least, the other end of the tube may be opened, and the color taken out with the palette knife, and rubbed down with turpentine. It would be well to change the position

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of the tubes lying in the box, occasionally, to prevent the color separating from the oils with which it is mixed. The tops should also be screwed on very tight, as the paint is liable to run out.

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CHAPTER V.

COMPOSITION OF PALETTES FOR VARIOUS STYLES OF PAINTING.

In the following pages will be found lists of colors and mixtures to be used for the various subjects which may be painted on china.

I do not wish to be understood as saying that these are the only combinations that can be used, or that they are the best, but simply that in my own experience they have produced the desired results.

Each artist has his own method of making up his palette. The liberty of choice enjoyed in mixing oil or water colors is, however, somewhat abridged in china painting by the chemical changes produced by the action of the fire, which forbids mixtures which would be quite innocent in either of the former mediums.

The following palettes are, however, suggested

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for the benefit of those unfamiliar with the use of enamel colors as combinations which may be relied upon to produce the results attributed to them.

I have endeavored to limit the number of colors as far as possible, believing that where one color will produce the desired effect, the mention of half a dozen only confuses the student. The difficulty of indiscriminate mixing, referred to before, renders a greater number of colors necessary in china painting than in oil or water colors. Yet, as in those branches of art, it is better to have a limited palette, and learn its full capacity, than to become involved in the intricacies of one embracing more colors, but producing combinations less likely to harmonize. It is certainly less confusing, and leads to more thorough knowledge, for a beginner to use few colors, and comprehend perfectly how effects are produced.

It will be proper to introduce here a classification of the colors used in china painting, which

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will lead to an understanding of the way in which they may be mixed.

M. Lacroix, from whose work the following is adapted, has classified the colors with regard to iron, which plays an important part in the composition of many of them.

First Group. Colors without iron—the whites, blues, and the gold colors.

Second Group. Colors containing but little iron—yellows and greens.

Third Group. Colors whose base is iron—the reds, flesh reds, red browns, iron violets, the browns, brown yellows, ochres, blacks, and most of the greys.

In the first class, the colors whose base is gold are the carmines, carmine lake, the purples, and the golden violets.

The foundation of these colors is purple of cassius, which is made of gold and tin. It gives tints which vary from lilac to dark violet. Modified by silver and different fluxes, it produces carmines and purples.

If the carmines are fired at too low a tempera-

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ture, the silver predominates and the color takes a dirty yellow tint. If, on the contrary, the temperature is too high, the shade of silver is completely destroyed, and the carmine changes to lilac. This effect does not exist in the purples to the same degree. Carmine will also take a yellowish tint in the firing if applied very thickly.

The blues, with rare exceptions, owe their color to cobalt. As the mixture of cobalt and iron gives tints varying from light grey to black, according to the proportions, it is well to take great precaution when using the blues with the reds, flesh colors, browns, and ochres.

The brushes which have been used with these colors should also be carefully washed before using for a blue of which a pure tint is desired.

Care should be observed in the use of the yellows, some of which cause the colors mixed with them to disappear entirely in the fire. This effect is seen where too much ivory yellow is mixed with red.

Mixing yellow and jonquil yellow do not contain iron, and are preferable, therefore, for mix-

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ing with the blues to obtain fresh greens. Other yellows containing iron should, on the contrary, be used with the iron colors.

The color called silver yellow does not contain silver; it is composed of jonquil and orange yellows. It mixes readily with the gold colors, also with iron violet, and sometimes with reds.

Coral color can not be used in painting, on account of its extreme sensibility to the fire, which at a high temperature will sometimes change it to yellow.

Most of the browns owe their tints to the mixture of cobalt and iron. They frequently contain zinc also. The yellow browns and ochres are generally produced by a mixture of iron and zinc.

The best blacks are usually made of cobalt and iron, like the browns, only in the former the cobalt predominates.

All the greys, with the exception of platina grey, are made by mixing colors of the different groups—blacks, blues, and reds, according to the tints required.

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Greys may also be obtained in painting by mixing complementary colors—the reds and greens, yellows and violets (those composed of carmine and blue). Grey may also be made by mixing one-third ivory black with two-thirds sky blue. Wherever black is used very thinly to form a grey tint, it should be mixed with a little blue. Black used alone, in thin washes, is sometimes found to rub off after the firing.

Some colors require more heat for their fusion than others. These are called hard colors.

As the flux, joined to the coloring oxide in the manufacture of the colors, lightens the tint, it follows that those containing less flux—viz. the dark colors—are harder than the light colors.

The lighter and more fusible colors, though burning in the same time, are the *bleu ciel clair* (light sky blue); *carmin tendre, A* (soft carmine, A,); the *gris perle* (pearl grey); *gris roux* (reddish grey), and the *jaune d'ivoire* (ivory yellow). These colors should not be applied too thickly, as they will be liable to scale in firing.

If by any means the painting should not have

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received sufficient glaze in the firing, the glaze may be restored by applying a light wash of one of the more fusible colors, and firing the piece again. For mixtures of brown or reddish tones a very light wash of fusible grey may be used.

The *blanc fixe* (permanent white) and other opaque compounds are seldom employed in painting on hard porcelain, their use being limited to little touches or spots, for heightening the effect in jewels or embroidery, or for the highest light in white flowers or drapery.

It would be better before beginning to paint with the china colors, to arrange, upon a plate of the kind of china you wish to use, samples of the different colors and mixtures, carefully marked. This, after it has been fired, will be of great assistance for reference in using the colors.

PAINTING IN MONOCHROME.

Painting in this style, *en camaïeu*, as it is called by the French, has a very pleasing effect on china, and, as it is somewhat easier than that in

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which various colors are used, may be recommended to the beginner, especially if unfamiliar with the use of oil or water colors.

Paintings *en camaïeu* may be made in almost any color. The easiest to use for this purpose are, probably, *violet de fer* (iron violet) or *brun rouge riche* (deep red brown). Sepia may also be easily employed with good effect.

Monochromes in pink and blue are very pretty; but the colors are rather more difficult to use.

Carmine may be used for pink monochromes. The tint, however, is likely to be affected differently by the fire, where it is laid on thinly or the contrary. It is difficult, in using this color, to have two pieces intended to match fired with the same tint.

Pourpre riche (deep purple) may also be used, with less risk of having the tint altered by the fire.

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PALETTES FOR FLOWER PAINTING.

Colors Required.

Vert, No. 5, *pré*—Grass green.
Vert, No. 6, *brun*—Brown green.
Vert, No. 7, *noir*—Black green.
Vert pomme—Apple green.
Jaune à mêler—Mixing yellow.
Jaune jonquille—Jonquil yellow.
Jaune orangé—Orange yellow.
Bleu ceil azur—Sky blue.
Bleu riche—Deep blue.
Carmine, No. 3, *foncé*—Dark carmine.
Pourpre riche—Deep purple.
Violet d'or—Golden violet.
Rouge capucine—Capucine red.
Rouge orangé—Orange red.
Brun rouge riche—Deep red brown.
Rouge chair, No. 2—Flesh red, No. 2.

In laying on the first washes, for a flower, the strokes of the brush should proceed from the

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circumference to the center, and for a leaf, from the central vein to the edge. In painting grasses or parallel-veined leaves the stroke should be made from the top to the bottom of the leaf. After the design is prepared, lay in first the local tints of the various parts, so that they may be dry by the time you wish to paint the shadow. Do this with flat, broad washes, blending them with a small brush, if necessary. By the time the last of these washes has been placed the part first done will be ready for the shading.

The centers of flowers should be painted directly on the china. Any adjacent colors which may infringe upon the outline must be scraped or wiped off.

On white grounds the painting should be rather light, to avoid a hard effect, and on dark colored grounds, correspondingly dark, to avoid weakness.

FOLIAGE.

For the local tint use *vert*, *No.* 5, *pre* (grass green). Blue may be added if a bluish green is desired, or, if a yellow green, it may be made

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by the addition of *jaune à mêler* (mixing yellow) or *jaune jonquille* (jonquil yellow), if a more brilliant tint is desired.

Vert brun (brown green) may be used for the shadows, mixed with grass green, using more of the former as the shadow deepens. A small quantity of dark blue may also be added to darken and subdue the tint.

Vert, No. 7, *noir* (black green) may be used in some cases for very dark shadows, but should be employed with great care, as it is a color of great intensity.

Carmine and purple may be used with greens, when greyish shadows are required.

Greens may also be shaded with brown. *Brun* 4 *foncé* (dark brown) may be used also for touches of brown. For red touches on leaves, etc., *violet de fer* (iron violet) may be employed.

FLOWERS.

For white flowers the surface of the china forms the local tint. For the shadows a grey

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made of black with the addition of a very small quantity of blue may be used, or any of the other greys previously mentioned. *Gris noir* (black grey) is a bluish grey of great intensity, which must be used with great care, especially in mixtures with reds and yellows.

The highest lights may be touched with *blanc fixé* (permanent white) or *blanc chinois* (Chinese white).

Yellow flowers may be painted with *jaune â mêler* (mixing yellow) or *jaune jonquille* (jonquil yellow) and shaded with *vert brun* (brown green). When touched with brownish red, *violet de fer* (iron violet) may be used.

For blue flowers either of the blues may be used according to the tint desired. They may be shaded with the black or *gris noir* (black grey). Some colors, such as that of the common pale blue morning-glory, may require the addition of a little carmine.

Pink flowers may be painted with carmine, and shaded with a grey made of carmine and *vert pomme* (apple green).

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Dark crimson may be made with *pourpre riche* (deep purple), shaded with the same.

Dark purple flowers can be painted with *pourpre riche* (deep purple), and *bleu riche* (deep blue), adding more or less of the blue, according as the color desired is more purple or crimson. They should be shaded with the same color. This mixture forms a tint of great intensity. *Violet d'or* (golden violet) may also be used for purple flowers, with the addition of *bleu riche* (deep blue), when desired.

For red flowers there are *rouge capucine* (capucine red), *rouge orangé* (orange red), *brun rouge riche* (deep red brown), or *rouge chair* (flesh red). They may be shaded with the same tint used for the lights, and by the addition of black, brown, or *violet de fer* (iron violet), according to the color desired.

Yellow centers of flowers may be painted with mixing yellow, shaded with brown green, and touched with sepia or heightened with jonquil or orange yellow.

When floral designs are painted from na-

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ture, it would, perhaps, be better to make the studies in water-colors. The painting can then be executed on the china with more freedom.

Designs in water-colors are better suited for reproduction on china than when painted in oil colors, as the former method bears a much closer resemblance to china-painting.

The flowers should be arranged in a careless, graceful manner. A design occupying one side of a plate, for instance, and straying over into the border, will be more pleasing than one placed directly in the center. Grasses may accompany the flowers with good effect, and are so easy to paint that they may be recommended to the beginner as good subjects for the first studies from nature.

BUTTERFLIES.

Butterflies form a very pretty accompaniment to flowers on china. They should be painted in positions as natural as possible. After the sketch

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is made the black markings and veining of the wings should be painted with *noir d'ivoire* (ivory black), and afterward the intermediate spaces filled up with the proper colors. For brown butterflies, sepia may be used. Take *jaune à mêler* (mixing yellow) for the common yellow butterfly, and shade with *vert brun* (brown green).

PALETTE FOR LANDSCAPES.

Colors Required.

Vert, No. 5, *pré*—Grass green.
Vert, No. 6, *brun*—Brown green.
Vert pomme—Apple green.
Vert noir—Black green.
Bleu ciel ou azur—Sky blue.
Bleu riche—Deep blue.
Vert bleu riche—Deep blue green.
Brun, 4 *foncé*—Dark brown.
Brun sépia—Sepia.
Jaune d'ivoire—Ivory yellow.
Jaune à mêler—Mixing yellow.
Carmine, No. 3, *foncé*—Dark carmine.
Noir d'ivoire—Ivory black.

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Sketch lightly with a hard lead pencil. Wash in the sky with *bleu ciel* (sky blue) and blend it. Clouds should be taken out before it dries. This may be done by wiping off the color with a cloth. To prevent it from drying too quickly, the color used for the sky might be mixed with a little more oil.

Shadows of the clouds may be painted with a grey made of ivory black and sky blue. If a yellowish tint is desired for the lighter parts, *jaune d'ivoire* (ivory yellow) may be used.

The distance can be painted with *vert pomme* (apple green) and carmine, allowing the apple green to predominate.

For a tint more purple, *vert bleu riche* (deep blue green) may be used with carmine.

For nearer parts, take apple green subdued with *vert noir* (black green), or *vert brun* (brown green).

These tints must all be applied very delicately.

The trunks of trees and particularly any branches relieved against the sky may now be sketched in with *brun*, 4 *foncé* (dark brown).

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The foliage should be painted with short, broad touches, to give the proper effect. For the highest lights, when the color is yellow green, use *vert*, *No.* 5, *pré* (grass green) and *jaune à mêler* (mixing yellow). For the middle tints, grass green alone. Shadows may be made with the addition of *vert brun* (brown green).

A good tint for the dark shadows can be made from grass green subdued with brown green and a little deep blue.

Black green is a good color for very intense tints, but must be used sparingly.

Water may be painted with apple green and sky blue; also, with *vert bleu riche* (deep blue green) applied delicately. For reflections of trees, use black green heightened with grass green.

For earth, ochre, or any of the lighter browns, such as yellow brown, or sepia, may be used, subdued with black.

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PALETTE FOR HEADS OR FIGURES.

Colors Required.

Rouge chair, No. 2—Flesh red, No. 2.
Brun rouge riche—Deep red brown.
Jaune d'ivoire—Ivory yellow.
Bleu ciel ou azur—Sky blue.
Noir d'ivoire—Ivory black.
Brun 4 *foncé*—Dark brown.
Brun Sépia—Sepia.

METHOD OF PAINTING A HEAD.

Sketch the design very lightly with a hard lead pencil. If you have difficulty in preserving a pencil outline while working on it, the sketch may be made in water colors, or with an enamel color mixed with water. This has the advantage, that it will allow you work over it without coming up. Take any reddish color and make a very delicate outline with the brush.

For the background, mix about one-third *noir*

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d'ivoire (ivory black) with two-thirds *bleu ciel* (sky blue). With this mixture commence by washing in the background lightly, making it darker near the head and lighter toward the outer edges, where, when blended, it should lose itself in the white of the china. This tint should be laid very rapidly, leaving the outer edge in irregular, cloud-like masses. The color should be rather oily, so that it will blend better. You will hardly be able, however, to put in more than one-half before it is ready to blend, if the head is of any size. It can, however, be readily joined above the head where the tint is light. By the time you have washed in one-half your background, it will then be ready to blend, if the color has not been used too wet, and you can proceed to level the tint with a medium-sized blender. Be particularly careful to soften the edges into an insensible gradation toward the white surface. If you have not been quick enough, and your background has become too dry for this, you will have to wipe it out and begin over again, using a little more oil with the colors.

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The other side of the background is finished in the same way, care being taken that the juncture with the side already done should show as little as possible.

You may then proceed to the flesh tint. For this take one-third *rouge chair No.* 2 (flesh red No. 2), and mix it with two-thirds *jaune d'ivoire* (ivory yellow). Be careful not to take too much of the yellow, as, if an excess of it is used, it will devour the red when fired. The tint will, of course, be made dark or light, according to the complexion desired. With this tint wash in the local color of the face and neck, carefully passing around your tracing if it is in pencil. It will probably be necessary to blend this tint, using a small brush.

You should be careful not to cover so large a surface with this wash that it will dry before you have time to blend it. The whole of the face should be done at once if possible, as otherwise it will be difficult to hide the juncture.

The local tint of the hair may then be washed in, and that of any drapery which may be col-

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ored. Leaving this part of the work to dry, you may now return to the background, which will now, probably, be dry enough to work over, with care.

If it should not be dry enough, the piece may be put into the oven a few moments to dry the first washes.

Work over the background with cross hatchings of the tint previously used, taking a moderately large brush, and making the lines rather broad, not too long, and very slightly curved.

Form in this way a shading in the background, beginning very lightly inside the edge of the first wash, and proceeding with an insensible gradation toward the center, darkening it in this way around the head, according as you wish a dark or light background. Where it is suitable, a light background seems to have the most pleasing effect upon the white ground, and is also less difficult to paint.

In working over the tints first laid, be very careful not to have your brush too wet, as that will cause the under color to come up. The

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damage thus done is very difficult to repair. This will not be so likely to happen if the work has been dried in the oven.

After the background proceed to the face. For the shadow tint mix one-third *noir d'ivoire* (ivory black), one-third *bleu ciel* (sky blue), and one-third *rouge chair, No.* 2, (flesh red, No. 2). Be careful not to have too much blue, as that will give the shadows too green a tint in the firing, although it will not show previously. More of the flesh color may be added when you wish to lighten the shadows, or when a more ruddy tint is desired. The features may be outlined delicately with this shadow tint, and then the masses of shadow should be placed. Put them as nearly as possible in their proper places, with a very light touch, and without blending if possible.

It may probably be necessary to blend the edges, and the darker portions should, perhaps, be lined and stippled in the finishing. Before the shadows are completed, the cheeks and lips may be touched with *brun rouge riche* (deep red brown), used very delicately. This color is rather

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intensified than otherwise by the fire, and although it is an excellent tint for this purpose, it must be used with care.

The lips may be shaded with a little black mixed with the red brown, or with *violet de fer* (iron violet). The nostrils may also be delicately touched with this color, but should be darkened with the shadow color of the flesh.

The eyebrows and eyes should now be painted, the eyebrows with a light tint, corresponding to the local color of the hair, and the shadow color to be used in the hair. Blend them naturally into the flesh color with delicate lines and shadings. The eyes may be painted with *bleu ciel* (sky blue) shaded with black, or with brown shaded with black, if dark. The spot of reflected light on the eye may be left the white of the china, or touched with permanent white.

White may be employed for such purposes as this, or for pearls, to imitate embroidery or lace, and for the highest lights in white drapery, but must be used with care. It seems rather liable to spread in the firing, and sometimes to blister.

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But to continue—if the hair is dark, take *brun, No.* 4, *foncé* (dark brown) and shade it with black mixed with the brown; or, if light, use yellow brown, or sepia, subdued with black. If very light, ivory yellow can be used for the first wash, and left for the highest lights, shaded with sepia and black. The touches of the brush in making the hair should be fine strokes, outlining and giving direction to the masses. The hair should never be blended.

These finishing touches of the hair, as well as those on the face, should be done with a fine brush. After the various parts have been brought to about the same degree of finish, they should be gone over again, and be brought together up to the highest degree of finish possible to the painter. It is well to know when to stop, however, as overworking is as bad as lack of finish. There is a great deal in knowing when to let well enough alone. When you do not see anything more to do, stop.

The drapery, if white, should be painted so as to leave the white of the china for the local

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color, and shaded with black with the addition of a little sky blue.

MONOGRAMS.

Monograms and similar designs may be painted in gold and colors. They should be drawn very carefully with a hard lead pencil, or, if necessary, traced from a correct drawing, and placed exactly in the center of the place to be ornamented.

Letters require very precise drawing, and should be taken from some authentic alphabet. Old English letters are the best. Good specimens, which would be of great assistance in this very interesting study, will be found in the "*Art of Illuminating*," by Tymms and Wyatt. The quarto edition of 1860 is the best.

Gold may be obtained from the decorator. If in a moist state, it will be ready for use with turpentine, which may be added with the brush; or, if in powder, a little oil of turpentine should be added in rubbing it down, with spirits of turpentine, for diluting, as before.

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The gold should not be laid on too thinly, and on the contrary, not so thickly as to stand out in relief on the surface. Gold mixed with oil has, before firing, a dark brown color, and should be laid upon the surface so as to completely obscure the white of the china. Letters in gold may be shaded with a line of black.

Care must be taken that the gold and colors are never laid one over the other, or, when placed close together, that the edges of the two should not impinge, as this would have a bad effect in the firing.

Gold and colors sometimes affect each other injuriously when placed in close proximity in the painting, and fired at the same time. However, when gold has been prepared to stand the same degree of heat as the colors, and is used for borders or for similar purposes, a good result can usually be obtained in one firing.

Palettes for fruit and other subjects may be selected from the lists of colors already given, but the rules as to the mixture of the pigments with reference to their chemical composition must be kept in mind.

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CHAPTER VI.

TINTED GROUNDS.

In mixing tints for borders or any considerable surfaces, it is necessary to use more oil than for other painting. It is especially desirable to mix enough balsam of copaiva with the color and the other oils, to prevent it from drying before there is time to blend it. The quantity of oil varies with the depth of the tint desired, and the particular color used, also the condition of the atmosphere at the time the ground is laid. Some colors, such as carmine and blue, require more oil than others, and are more difficult to lay. It is hard to give an idea of the amount of oil which should be used in any particular case. There is no danger of using so much that the paint will blister in the firing, when it is laid very thinly.

Enough color must be mixed to cover the en-

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tire surface upon which the ground is to be laid, at once. If tube colors are used, it will simply be necessary to mix a little balsam of copaiva with them as they are taken from the tubes, to keep them from drying too rapidly. They may then be diluted with turpentine.

If the powdered colors are used they should be mixed with an amount of oil of turpentine, which would occupy nearly as much space as the powder, rather less of oil of lavender, and about twice as much balsam of copaiva. Afterward diluted with spirits of turpentine. For laying grounds, the color should be very thin, so that it will flow readily from the brush. Mix on a glass slab, and rub down well with a muller. When perfectly smooth, have ready a piece of the finest wire cloth, three or four inches square, bend it to form a depression in the middle, and strain the color through it, lifting it with the palette knife, and letting it drip through just before you are ready to use it, so that it may be free from any particles of dust.

Take a broad, flat brush, charge it well with

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color, and pass it rapidly over the surface to be tinted. If a cup, hold it upside down by the handle, and make the strokes from the bottom to the top; or if you wish to tint the border of a plate, the strokes may be made across the flat edge, taking a direction from the center to the circumference. If a vase, you should begin at the top, passing around with short, over-lapping strokes, taking care that the color is not so wet that it will run.

When the surface has been covered, let it rest a moment, until the color begins to set, and, upon lightly touching the edge, it feels slightly sticky. Then go over it with the blending brush, holding the brush perpendicular to the surface upon which you are operating, just touching it, not dragging the brush or letting it rest upon the surface, and not twice upon the same place.

After waiting a moment or so, you may go over it again, and continue to blend it until the tint is perfectly even.

If the brush becomes charged with the color, it must be cleaned on a cloth wet with alcohol,

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and left a few moments to dry, or it may possibly do to wipe it on a dry cloth. It is better, however, to have two or three blenders at hand, so that if one becomes unfit for use, another can be substituted at once.

Care must be taken that the brush, after it is cleaned in alcohol, should become perfectly dry before it is used again, as the alcohol will remove the color. Dampness should also be avoided when laying grounds.

A ball of cotton tied in a fine linen or cotton cloth is sometimes used for blending, instead of a brush.

The color which may have been allowed to go over the edge should be carefully wiped off as soon as you have finished blending.

By the use of a turning wheel the work of putting on borders is, of course, much facilitated. The wheel, however, is not absolutely necessary, except when narrow bands are to be made. A full border for a plate may be put on in the manner described above.

It is difficult to describe narrow bands and

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lines, even upon circular pieces of china, as they are seldom perfectly round, and the line has to be adapted to a slightly uneven surface. It would be as well not to attempt work of this kind, which had better be left to the decorator.

Where dark grounds are desired, the color should be dusted on by the following process:

Take a few drops of the oil especially prepared for this purpose, thin with spirits of turpentine, and mix thoroughly, by rubbing down with the palette knife. Afterward, with a large brush charged with it, pass quickly over the surface of the china, being careful not to leave any spaces uncovered and to put it on as evenly as possible.

Have ready a ball of cotton tied in a piece of soft raw silk, and touch it lightly, distributing the oil evenly over the whole surface. After waiting a moment or so until the oil has become slightly sticky, take a large blending brush, charged as fully as possible with the powdered color you wish to use, and dust it over the prepared surface, without slighting any

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part. If a surplus of powder lies upon the surface anywhere, brush it off very lightly.

As the powder arising from this process is disagreeable, as well as injurious, means should be taken to prevent its inhalation.

This method, after all, is rather uncertain in unskillful hands, it being very difficult to measure the success of the work until after the firing, which, by rendering the color transparent, brings out every defect.

Grounds of delicate tint, however, are very pretty, and can be easily managed, after some little practice, according to the directions given above.

Besides the colors used in painting, there are others especially prepared for grounds, which can not be mixed.

It is as well to procure colors for grounds in powder; especially, if they can be had, those prepared by M. Lacroix, of the quality No. 3, which are as finely ground as the tube colors.

If it is desired to paint a design upon the tinted ground, the ground must be removed

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from the place the design is to occupy. If this were not done, the color underneath would in the firing mix with those superimposed, and spoil the tints. This may be done by either of the following methods:

First, the ground may be tinted, and, after it is thoroughly dry, the design may be scratched upon the surface and the color removed with a scraper. A stick of soft wood, with a flattened point moistened with turpentine, is also useful for this purpose; or, if the scraper alone is used, the surface uncovered should be carefully cleaned, after its use, with the end of a cloth rolled into a point and moistened with turpentine.

The design may also be drawn upon the tinted surface with a hard lead pencil (if delicately and correctly done), and the color removed as before.

Perhaps the second method would be the best for any one not quite sure of drawing the design correctly at once. That is, to draw the design on the china first in India ink or any water color which will show. The ground laid over this will not disturb the outline, and, the sketch showing

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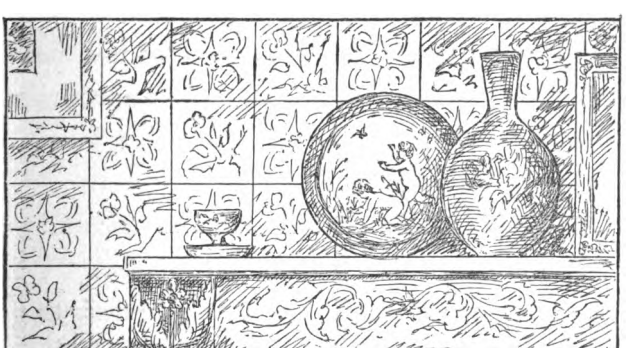
through it perfectly, the design can be easily removed by the process described after the first method. This outline will burn out in the firing. It would, however, be better to remove it as far as possible, especially if dark, in order that it may not interfere with the proper treatment of the edges of the painted design.

Designs in colors, black silhouettes or monochromes in grey, may be painted in this manner upon tinted grounds.



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CHAPTER VII.

GENERAL REMARKS ON DECORATION.

The mode of decoration should have reference to the use for which a piece of china is intended.

Heads, figures, landscapes or flowers may ornament plates, plaques or panels, which are to be hung as pictures, or to have the place of honor in the decoration of a piece of furniture.

For pieces or services intended for use, heads or figures do not seem entirely appropriate. Flowers or conventional designs would be more fitting for such purposes.

Models of these various styles of decorations are to be found, which may be copied.

For figures, there are the exquisite designs of Boucher, fac-similes of which are published collectively or on separate sheets.

Walter Crane's toy books would also furnish good designs for another style, and photographs

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from paintings or from life also furnish available models.

These studies are not, however, to be recommended to those who have not had a thorough training in the art of drawing.

The slightest error is painfully apparent in the drawing of a face or figure. The lack of the freedom of hand, acquired by long practice, will be manifest, and even a correct tracing from the original will not save the outline from distortion.

Numerous engravings and photographs of landscapes can be obtained, which may be painted in colors or monochrome, and will be very pleasing, as well as less difficult to draw.

Conventional forms are to be had from various sources.

Those from Japanese designs are excellent subjects for ceramic decorations. As for all decorative purposes, designs of a conventional character are the most generally appropriate and in the best taste.

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If the artist is capable of composing good decoration of this kind, so much the better.

This, as well as every other branch of art, finds its best inspiration and development in the study of the harmonies of color and form existing in nature. Good conventional designs must be in accordance with the laws of natural forms.

Flowers furnish, probably, the most generally pleasing decoration for china, and will be more frequently found within the scope of the abilities of the amateur. It is rather difficult to obtain good designs for the purpose of copying. But why be content with a poor copy at second-hand when the whole book of nature lies open before you? Let me urge those who wish to practice art with profit as well as pleasure to enter upon this delightful study.

The pleasure of being able to record the innumerable and exquisite combinations of color and form all around us, and the feeling of ownership in the studies thus made, will more than compensate for the labor required to accomplish

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these results. In the expressive words of Hamerton, "This indeed is a noble object, to gain admission into the paradise of natural beauty, and whoever labors bravely for that end shall have his reward."

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